

Marzia Varutti

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Date of birth: 6 November 1973 Nationality: Italian

Academic Affiliation and Education

- 2012- Centre for Museum Studies, Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages (IKOS), University of Oslo, Norway – Post-doctoral Fellow.
- 2011- School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, UK – Honorary Research Fellow.
- 2010-11 School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester – AHRC Early Career Research Fellow, *Nationalizing ethnicity: museums and the representation of cultural difference in China and Taiwan*
 Sept/Dec 2010: *Visiting Researcher*, IKOS, University of Oslo.
 Sept-Dec 2011: *Visiting Researcher*, Graduate School of Museum Studies, Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA), Taiwan, Taiwan Fellowship Program – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, R.O.C.
- 2009-10 School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, UK – Honorary Visiting Fellow.
- 2003-8 Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, University of Geneva (IHEID) – PhD. Thesis title “Which museum for what China? Museums, objects and the politics of representation in the post-Maoist transition (1976-2007)”.
- 2001-3 IHEID – Master (Diplôme d’études approfondies). Thesis title «L’Etat réinventé. Réflexions autour des Républiques ex-soviétiques d’Asie centrale» grade 5.50/6.00.
- 1998-9 Institute of International Sociology, Gorizia, Italy/Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Preparatory course to the diplomatic career.
- 1992-7 University of Udine, Italy – Degree in Economics, grade 99/110.

International Grants and Awards

- 2010 AHRC Post-doctoral Fellowship (ref. AH/H040005/1) for the project *Nationalizing ethnicity: museums and the representation of cultural difference in Taiwan and China*. The project was evaluated grade 6 (out of 6) ‘an outstanding proposal meeting world-class standards of scholarship, originality, quality and significance.’
- 2010 *Taiwan Fellowship Program* organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan), to conduct fieldwork research on museums and indigenous peoples in Taiwan, based at the Graduate School of Museum Studies, Taipei National University of the Arts, Sept-Dec 2011.
- 2010 Recipient of research funds from the Research Council of Norway, the project *Norway’s Others: the representation of cultural difference in Norwegian Museums* based at the IKOS, UiO, and linked to the research project *Patterns of Cultural Valuation* September and December 2010.
- 2009 Grant from the British Academy (ref. SG-54072) to conduct six months’ fieldwork research on Aborigines museums in Taiwan (*Indigenizing the nation: the politics of representation of Aborigines in the museums of Taiwan*), Feb-Jul 2010.
- 2009 Grant from the Research Council of Norway (ref. 195787/V11) for the project ‘*Norway’s Others: the representation of cultural difference in Norwegian Museums*’ based at IKOS, UiO, Sept-Jan 2010.
- 2007 *Crowther-Beynon Fund*, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge, endowed to research the Museum’s collections of Chinese Ethnic Minorities’ costumes.
- 2006 *Young Scientists Fellowship*, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC-KFPE, to conduct research in China in collaboration with the Department of Museology, Fudan University, Shanghai.
- 2005 *Young Researchers* scheme, Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) to conduct research, as part of the doctoral program, at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge.
- 2004 *University Exchange* award, SDC-FPE, to conduct two months research at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, China.

Publications

(in preparation) *China on Display. Museums and the politics of representation after Mao*, 'Heritage Matters' series, International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies, Newcastle University: Boydell & Brewer.

Book chapters

2011 'Learning to share knowledge. Collaborative projects between national and indigenous museums in Taiwan', in Golding V. & Wayne M. (eds), *Museums, Curators and Communities: Intercultural Collaboration*, Oxford: Berg.

2011 'Towards social inclusion in Taiwan: museums, equality and indigenous groups', in R. Sandell & E. Nightingale (eds) *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*, London: Routledge.

2011 'Standardizing difference: narratives of national and ethnic identities in the museums of the Peoples' Republic of China' in Dudley S. et al. (eds), *The thing about museums*, London: Routledge.

2010 'The aesthetics and narratives of national museums in China' in Aronsson P., Bugge Amundsen A. & Knell S. (eds), *National Museums*. London: Routledge.

2010 'Indexes of exclusion: absence and silences in Chinese ethnic minority museums' in Guntarik O. (ed) *Narratives of Community: Museums and Ethnicity*, Edinburgh: MuseumsEtc.

Refreed journal articles

2011 'Gradients of alterity: museums and the negotiation of cultural difference in contemporary Norway' in Naguib S. et al. (eds) *Patterns of Cultural Valuation. Priorities and Aesthetics in Exhibitions of Identity in Museums*, Special Issue ARV Nordic Yearbook of Folklore, 67, p.13-36.

2011 'Miniatures of the nation: ethnic minority figurines, mannequins and dioramas in Chinese museums', *Museum and Society*, 9(1): 1-16.

2010 'Using different pasts in a similar way. Museum representations of national history in Norway and China' in Peter Aronsson (ed). *Culture Unbound. Journal of Current Cultural Research*. Thematic section: 'Uses of the Past – Nordic historical cultures in comparative perspective', 2 (40): 745-768.
Online: <http://www.cultureunbound.ep.liu.se/v2/a40/>

2010 'The politics of imagining and forgetting in Chinese ethnic minorities museums' in Kontopodis M. & Matera V. (eds), *Doing Memory, Doing Identity: Politics of the Everyday in Contemporary Global Communities*. In *Outlines: Critical Practice Studies*, special issue.
Online <http://ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/outlines/index>

2008 'A Chinese puzzle: the representation of Chinese Ethnic Minorities in the Museums of Kunming, Yunnan Province of China', *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*, 1(3): 35-42.

Non-refreed publications

2013 [forthcoming] 'Villa Sovietica. Soviet Objects: Import-Export' Exhibition Review, *Journal of Museum Ethnography*.

2012 [Book Review] The lives of Chinese objects: Buddhism, Imperialism and display by Louise Tythacott, *JRAI* 18(4):889-890

2011 Taiwanese memory revisited, *ICOM NEWS Magazine* 64(3).

2008 'Thinking through the 'Other': comparing representations of cultural alterity at the British Museum and the Shanghai Museum', in Aronsson, P. and Nyblom, A. (eds.) *Comparing: National Museums, Territories, Nation-Building and Change. NaMu IV, Linköping University, Norrköping, Sweden 18–20 February 2008, Linköping Electronic Conference Proceedings, No. 30, Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press*.
Online: <http://www.ep.liu.se/ecp/030/>

2008 'Representing and 'consuming' the Chinese Other at the British Museum", in A. Bugge Amundsen and A. Nyblom (eds.) *National Museums in a Global World. NaMu III, Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, University of Oslo, Norway, 19–21 November 2007, Linköping Electronic Conference Proceedings, No. 31, Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press*.
Online: <http://www.ep.liu.se/ecp/031/>

2008 *The Mary Lumsden Collection - A set of ethnic costumes from Yunnan, China*, unpublished research report, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge (UK).

Teaching experience

2012 *Representing and Interpreting Culture: World Arts/Museum Ethnography* principal lecturer, MA in Museum Studies, School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, November 12-16.

2012 Guest lecture, *Museums in Non-Western contexts*, Master course in Museology, IKOS, 22 October.

2012 Guest lecture, *Research methodologies in museum studies*, Master course in Museology, IKOS, 1 October.

2012 *Representing and Interpreting Culture: World Arts/Museum Ethnography* principal lecturer, MA in Museum Studies, School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, February 13-17.

2011 *Research methods in museum studies*, guest lecture, Master course in Museology, IKOS, January.

2011 *Museum ethics: equality, activism and social responsibility*, guest lecture, Master course 'Museums and contemporary issues', *Graduate Institute of Museum Studies, Taipei National University of the Arts*, Taiwan, November 1.

2011 *Cultures on Display: anthropology and museums*, guest lecture, Master course 'Museums and cultural performance', *Institute of Museum Studies, National Taipei University of Education*, Taiwan, October 27.

2011 *Research methods in museum studies*, guest lecture, Master course in Museology, Department of Culture Studies and Oriental languages, University of Oslo, 5 April.

2010 *Cultures on Display: anthropology and museums*, guest lecture, Master course 'Museums and contemporary issues', *Graduate Institute of Museum Studies, Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA)*, Taiwan 29 April 2010.

2010 *Exploring museum practices in Europe and East-Asia*, weekly research seminar for post-graduate students at the *Graduate Institute of Museum Studies (TNUA)*, March-June. Each of the 2-hours 13 seminar sessions included a presentation and discussion of an exhibition or museum case-study (by myself), and a short presentation of a student's project, followed by my comments and open debate.

2008 *Museum displays of other cultures and the aesthetics of modernity: case studies from Europe and China* guest lecture, Department of Anthropology, Yunnan University, China, 17 April.

In several occasions, I was invited by their supervisors to provide *informal supervision* for students conducting research on cultural heritage in China and Taiwan. These included a PhD student at the Department of Social Anthropology, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg; a MA student at Museion, University of Gothenburg; a MA student at the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester.

Selected conferences, workshops and seminars

2012 'Indigenous communities, activism, and new challenges for museum practice', *Museale og Archivale Praksiser Forskerkonferanse*, University of Oslo, 29-30 November.

2011 Multiple translations: museums and the interpretation of indigenous material culture in Taiwan, seminar paper, Institute of Anthropology, National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan, 29 November.

2011 'Nationalizing indigeneity? Museums and indigenous groups in Taiwan', *The Museum 2011 International Conference*, Taipei, Taiwan, 16-18 November.

2011 'Museum history: Why, how and for whom?', International Research Workshop, *Centre for Museum Studies, IKOS, UiO*, 6 June.

2011 'Learning to share knowledge? Contemporary initiatives of collaboration between museums and indigenous groups in Taiwan', seminar paper, *School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester*, 11 May.

2011 'Nationalizing indigeneity? Museums and indigenous groups in Taiwan', seminar paper, *International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies, University of Newcastle (UK)*, 31 March.

2011 Gradients of alterity: museums and the negotiation of cultural difference in contemporary Norway, seminar paper, *Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo*, 3 March.

2011 Gradients of alterity: museums and the negotiation of cultural difference in contemporary Norway, seminar paper, *School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester*, 17 February.

2010 'Tao canoes: an exploration into the polysemic character of a museum object', Re-visioning museal objects between things and signs, research seminar, IKOS, University of Oslo, 2-4 December 2010.

2010 'The museum representation of other cultures: ethnography, aesthetics, and community engagement', public conference, *National Museum of Prehistory*, Taitung, Taiwan, 23 July.

- 2010 'Indigenizing' the nation? The politics of representation of Aborigines in the museums of Taiwan', *The Museum 2010 International Conference*, Taipei, 17-19 May 2010.
- 2010 'China on Display: National Narratives in Chinese museums', *Museion – Department for Studies of Global Heritage and World Culture*, University of Gothenburg, 13 January 2010.
- 2009 Norway's Others: the representation of cultural difference in Norwegian Museums, *IKOS Museology Seminars*, University of Oslo, 9 December 2009.
- 2009 'The Nation and its 'Others'. Reflections on the museum representation of cultural difference in China and Norway', *IKOS Museology Seminars*, University of Oslo, 19 September 2009.
- 2008 'Domesticating cultural diversity in the museums of Kunming, Yunnan Province of China', *Material Worlds* conference, University of Leicester, 15-17 December.
- 2008 'The museum representation of the Chinese nation in the post-Mao era', *Department of Social Anthropology*, London School of Economics, 4 December.
- 2008 'Standardizing difference: narratives of national and ethnic identities in the museums of the Peoples Republic of China', *NaMu VI: European National Museums Encountering a Globalized Culture*, Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages (IKOS), University of Oslo, Norway, 17-19 November.
- 2008 'Narrating the Ethnic Other: Discursive practices of differentiation and inclusion in the museums of Kunming, China', *Experiencing Diversity and Mutuality* EASA conference, Ljubljana, 26-29 August.
- 2008 'A Chinese puzzle: the representation of Chinese of Ethnic Minorities in the Museums of Kunming, China', *The Inclusive Museum*, Leiden, The Netherlands, 8-11 June.
- 2008 'The museum representation of the cultural 'Other' and the aesthetics of modernity: case studies from Europe and China' seminar paper, Department of Anthropology, Yunnan University, China, 17 April.
- 2008 'Thinking through the 'Other': comparing representations of cultural alterity at the British Museum and the Shanghai Museum', *NaMu IV: Comparing – National museums, territories, nation-building and change*, Linköping University, Sweden, 18-20 February.
- 2007 'Representing and 'consuming' the Chinese Other at the British Museum', *NaMu III: National Museums in a Global World*, IKOS, University of Oslo, Norway, 19-21 November.
- 2007 'Which museum for what China? Museums, objects and the politics of representation in the post-Maoist transition', *NaMu II: National Museum narratives*, Dept. of Museum Studies, Leicester, 18-20 June.

Museum-related experience

- 2008 **Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge, MAA**– Volunteer assistant in the set up of a long term exhibition on Chinese ceramics (Jan-Feb).
- 2006-7 **MAA – Collections assistant** (6 months). My tasks included: supervising and assisting visiting scholars researching the MAA's collections, assisting in setting up and advertising new exhibitions, assisting in the set up of a website devoted to the Museum's Textile Collections, (to which I contributed, among other, the website design, see <http://maa.cam.ac.uk/textiles/>), providing general assistance with curatorial work.
- 2005-6 **MAA – Volunteer** assistant to the 'Textile Collections Project' (5 months) involving the digitalization and re-catalogation of MAA's textile collections.

Other professional experience

- 2000-01 **World Trade Organization, Geneva** – Web officer, Information and Media Relations Division (18 months).
- 2000 **International Movement Against all forms of Racial Discrimination, Geneva** –Intern (2 months) I reported on the 56th United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Languages

Italian: mother tongue; English: fluent; French: fluent; Chinese: basic; Spanish: basic.

Membership and affiliations

- Member of the MEG – Museum Ethnographers Group, UK.
- Associate Editor for the *International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*, Volume 1 (2008).
- Peer-reviewer for *Museum History Journal*, and *Museum and Society Journal*.